

Protect your health. Prevent disease.

Go lean with screen...

turn off the TV & be active!

Watching less television (TV) is one strategy supported by research to achieve and maintain a healthy weight, thus protecting your health and preventing diseases such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and some cancers. When less time is spent watching TV, more time is spent being active. Today is a good day to start to lean your screen time!

TV vs. Activity Time

TV viewing is a common sedentary activity that both adults and children enjoy. However, children watching too much television have decreased time spent being physically active, increased risk of being overweight; decreased academic performance, and sleep pattern disturbances. Most children in the U.S. watch 20 to 30 hours of television every week. In a year, the average child spends 900 hours in school and nearly 1,023 hours in front of a TV. That is 1,023 hours that your family could spend together playing, riding bikes, going for a family walk, or engaging friends in games.

Enjoy TV in Moderation

The American Academy of Pediatrics says:

- Children aged 2 and under should not watch any television.
- Older children should watch TV no more than 1-2 hours per day.

Adults should set limits on TV time for their children and for themselves. Plan a family activity in place of TV watching. Do not underestimate the power of role modeling healthy habits and healthy boundaries when it comes to watching less TV! Parents are their child's most important role models. Setting a good example by limiting your own TV viewing will help your child to do the same.



TV is Off – What Do You Do Now?

It may feel funny at first to have the TV off and you may not know what to do. The key is to do things that are fun, play games, go outside, walk the dog or visit a park. It is also okay to let children figure it out for themselves- to be creative and explore time in and around the house without TV. For substantial health benefits, children and adolescents should do a combination of aerobic, muscle-strengthening, and bone-strengthening activities at least 60 minutes or more daily. Adults should do a combination of aerobic and muscle-strengthening activities at least 150 minutes a week of moderate activity or at least 75 minutes of vigorous activity per week.

Tips to Decrease TV Time

- Turn the TV off during meal times.
- Children's bedrooms should be TV free.
- Monitor and view television shows with children.
- Do not use TV as a reward or punishment.
- Make some days of the week TV-free days.
- Encourage alternative activities: reading, playing, coloring, hobbies.
- Move around to your favorite music instead of watching TV.
- Go for a family walk.
- Try physical activity fun nights.
- Be active today!

Lead the Way!

Be a leader in making it easier to watch less TV. Take time at home, at school, at work, and in your community to support less TV viewing and more physical activity. Here are some suggestions:

Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set TV watching schedule for the whole family• Set aside time for the family to be physically active together several times a week• Remove TV from children's bedrooms
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote national TV Turn Off week• Utilize the local school or district wellness policies to implement reduced screen time during the school day• Join (or start) a school wellness team to address TV reduction efforts
Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create worksite health education classes that promote an active lifestyles and decreases sedentary habits• Develop policies at your work that promote active lifestyles• Join (or start) a worksite wellness coalition at work
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Start a community coalition promoting physical activity and decrease screen/TV time initiatives• Support community-based programs that engage outdoor recreation and parks to promote physical activity and decreased screen time• Promote screen time reduction during physician visit and provide health education for parents and families

Optimize your Health

Watching less TV is one of six national strategies supported by research to protect health and prevent disease. The other strategies include, being physically active, eating fruits and veggies, breastfeeding, reducing food portion sizes, and consuming less sugar-sweetened beverages. To learn more, visit: www.dhhs.ne.gov/nafh

Source: Public Health- Seattle and King County, "Live Outside the Box"- TV Reduction Campaign

Resources

www.screentime.org
<http://www.kingcounty.gov/healthServices/health/chronic/overweight/reducetv.aspx>
www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/live-it/screen-time.htm